

I recommend that the applicants either modify their proposal further to conserve the generic spelling *Cateretes* as well as CATERETIDAE, or (better) drop this whole aspect of their proposal and go back to the original proposal dealing only with the homonymous names BRACHYPTERINAE in Coleoptera and Plecoptera (and follow priority and original spellings in dealing with KATERETIDAE and *Kateretes*).

Additional references

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Comment on the proposed conservation of *Sphaerocera* Latreille, 1804 and *Borophaga* Enderlein, 1924 (Insecta, Diptera)

(Case 2907; see BZN 51: 312–315; 52: 181–183)

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In response to Brown (BZN 52: 182–183) I would point out that the possibility that *Borophaga okellyi* Schmitz, 1937 might be a synonym of *Musca subsultans* Linnaeus, 1767 was first suggested by Schmitz (1951). The fact that Beyer (in Schmitz [then deceased] & Beyer, 1965) ignored this is consistent with the opinion of his contemporaries (e.g. Borgmeier, 1967) that he was cavalier in his treatment of matters of detail. Unfortunately, initially Borgmeier (1963) also overlooked Schmitz's comments, but he subsequently remedied this (Borgmeier, 1968). In order to resolve the issue I critically evaluated the specimen in the Linnean Society collection in 1981, and confirmed the suspected synonymy (Disney, 1982). I then included this synonymy in the revised checklist of British species of PHORIDAE (Disney, 1983). Perhaps, instead, I should have requested the Commission to conserve the name *B. okellyi*. However, at that time the record of the Commission was that it was most reluctant to overrule the principle of priority, except in the most extreme cases. Likewise, 15 years ago the exhumation of long forgotten homonyms, and the consequent displacement of long familiar names, in pursuit of a rigid application of the principle of priority, was rampant. An example is the absurd case of *Phora aterrime* (Fabricius, 1794) and its replacement name *P. atra* (Meigen, 1804) (in Crosskey, 1980), which I have commented on elsewhere (Disney, 1994).

It would seem somewhat perverse to suggest now, 13 years after my note of 1982, that we should override the principle of priority in the interests of conserving the

nomenclature employed in two 1960's publications that are both now in need of much revision. While both works are still useful, much of their nomenclature has been subsequently amended. Despite the fact that the two more recent key works I have referred to previously are by myself, they are generally regarded as being more relevant references to the currently accepted nomenclature in the PHORIDAE. Furthermore, I have since used the name *B. subsultans* in my book (Disney, 1994), which is now found in libraries across the world. While I sympathise with Brown's disquiet at the displacement of familiar names, to now suggest the resurrection of a synonym replaced 13 years ago, purely on the grounds he proposes, would seem to owe more to parochialism than to more defensible considerations. It would certainly set a most unfortunate precedent. If the Commission were to accept the suppression of the name *subsultans*, as proposed in the application by Brown & Sabrosky, it would merely create confusion, especially as my proposal in 1982 was made in accordance with the Commission's record at that time. I therefore expect the Commission to stand by the nomenclatural consequences of my proposed synonymy of 1982. If it rules otherwise, one would be forced to conclude that the Commission no longer believes in its own principles; it would therefore be entirely proper to ignore any such ruling.

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Additional references

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Comment on the proposed conservation of HEMIDACTYLINI Hallowell, 1856 (Amphibia, Caudata)

(Case 2869; see BZN 50: 129–132; 51: 153–156, 264–265, 341–342)

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It may seem strange that so many people have commented on the proposed conservation of the rather obscure name HEMIDACTYLINI, which at the time of the application had been used less than 20 times since the taxon was recognized less than 30 years previously. I think this can be explained. It is the aim of some zoologists to completely abandon the principle of priority and to free systematics from 'the tyranny of the past' (Savage, 1990a, b), and they see this as a test-case. The response